Attack of the Mutant Camels

ATARI

PROGRAMMED BY

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Introduction: The Zzyaxian Attack on Earth

The attack came unexpectedly in the late 21st century. Humankind's first tentative steps towards the stars had been taken and progress was being made toward the development of a workable FTL drive, at last cheating Einstein and enabling Man to break from the mother world and go forth into the Galaxy.

Man, however, was not alone in the Galaxy. Many sentient races inhabited teeming planets, and all without exception slaved beneath the tyrannical rule of the **Evil Empire**: an evil fusion of the warlike races of Zzyax and Irata, who united to spread their evil rule over the entire Galaxy. Any race rebelling against the oppressive rule of the evil Overlords was annihilated totally and without mercy.

Zzyaxian agents, roaming the Galaxy and keeping an eye out for the development of potentially troublesome occurrences, looked upon Man's emerging space technology with alarm. No independent race must be allowed to achieve interstellar space-travell Plans were laid which the Zzyaxians intended would lead to the subjugation - or destruction, it didn't really matter - of this upstart planet which called itself Earth.

The first signs of the Zzyaxian plans in action were noticed on Earth as a spate of **UFO** sightings over Egypt and the Middle East. Naturally these were dismissed in the manner of all **UFO** sightings, and eventually they ceased and were forgotten.

Some 18 months later, all hell broke loose...

The Zzyaxians had, in secretive raids on Earth, abducted herds of harmless and **really very pleasant** Earthly dromedary **camels** and, using advanced genetic engineering, mutated them into **90 foot high, neutronium-shielded, laser-spitting death camels**. These apocalyptic beasts were let loose upon the Earth and, conditioned by the Zzyaxian mind-control processes, they marched relentlessly on, leaving a trail of death and annihilation.

The countries of Earth, united at last by a common threat of planetary destruction, laboured to produced a defence against the might of their **hairy** and **well-shielded** attackers. The result was a fighter ship, small and manoeuverable, which could fly around the unwieldy **beasties** and pump them full of neutron-cannon bolts. These bolts were, at that time, the only known weapon able to weaken **Neutronium**, the densest material in existence, found at the core of Black Holes and in the shields of Mutant Camels. Sufficient bolts to the beast would eventually destabilize the Neutronium shields, to the detriment of the camel and the **immense satisfaction** of the pilot.

Once a sector was cleared, the pilot could cut in **Warp** drive, a spinoff of the still-experimental FTL work, and provided the acceleration phase was achieved safely, the ship would instantaneously jump to a new and hostile sector.

With this battle began a long and bloody section of Mankind's history... but that's another story.

LOADING UP THE GAME IN YOUR ATARI

This game is provided on an autoboot cassette. It does not require BASIC language to work, so the load procedure is different to the usual CLOAD method.

1) **Turn off your Atari. Remove any cartridges that you may have plugged in.**
2) **Atari 400/800 owners:** Hold down the START key and turn on the Atari with this key held down.
XL model owners: Hold down both START and OPTION keys and turn on the Atari with **both** these keys held down.
3) **You will hear a bleep. Press the PLAY key on your cassette deck, and then press the RETURN key of your Atari.**
4) **You can hear the data going in. It's a good idea to listen, because then you can hear if there are any glitches on the tape.**
5) **Loading time is about 5 minutes. Once the program has loaded, the title page will be displayed.**

SELECTING FROM THE GAME'S OPTIONS

Variants on the basic game are selectable from the title/option screen. Pressing **OPTION** switches between 1 and 2 player games. Players use a single joystick plugged into joystick socket ✳1, passing it back and forth between them as necessary.

Pressing **SELECT** chooses the difficulty levels. There are six basic entry levels, chosen from the game's 25 skill levels. The easiest level is **Real Cool**, and the most difficult is **Like Wow!**

Moving the joystick RIGHT changes the bullet efficiency. With this set to 1, many blasts are required to kill a single camel. Set to 8, the beasts can be zapped in short order.

Press FIRE when you are ready to begin the game.

CONTROL OF THE SPACE SHIP AND WEAPONRY

When you materialize on screen, the ship is under your control. Moving the stick up and down results in a similar motion of the craft on screen. Pushing the stick left causes the ship to face left and accelerate in that direction. Pushing it to the right causes similar actions to the right.

Remember that the ship has inertia. When you change direction, you must thrust to lose speed in the direction you were going, to maintain thrust to accelerate in your new direction. Once maximum velocity is attained, it is not necessary to keep thrusting in order to maintain speed.

Practise control of the ship until you are confident in its control.

Firing: Holding down the FIRE button unleashes your Neutron cannon. The range of the bolts is **limited**. Fly close to the camel to achieve a rapid fire rate. Hold down the button to get **continuous firing**. Pour shots into the camel until it is destroyed.

Ship's Shields: Your craft possesses 9 impact shields. If you are hit by a camel's fire, you lose one shield. If you hit the **camel** itself, you lose a shield and the camel loses some of its Neutronium shielding. Beware of the bounce-off!

THE THREAT POSED BY THE BEASTS

You patrol a sector of the Earth containing six camels. It is your mission to destroy all the beasts before they **overrun** your Sector. Your **scanner** gives you a representation of your own, and the camels', positions within the Sector. The camels start at the left-hand edge of the Scanner and march relentlessly towards the right. Should the lead beast ever reach the **right-hand** scanner edge, your sector is **overrun** and the game is over. (The critical position is just under the 'T' in Player 2's 'JETS' indicator.)

The camels fire bullets at you to defend themselves against you. Dodge these, since they will take a shield off you. As you fire shots into the camel it will begin to **change colour** and **pulsate** as the neutronium becomes unstable. Eventually the shields will destabilise and the **animal** will de-rezz.

If you fly off the left-hand edge of your Sector, you re-enter at the right, and if you go out the right you came back in at the left.

When all your shields have been destroyed your current ship will **de-rezz**. If you still have ships in reserve (indicated by the JETS indicator just under your score) a new ship will rez up at the right-hand edge of your Sector. If you have no ships left, the game will **end**.

ACCELERATION AND HYPERWARP

This phase occurs when you clear all **6 camels** in your sector. You will be warned of Hyperdrive activity and acceleration will begin. During Acceleration you will be beset by **extremely nasty** rockets which you must dodge by moving up and down. Once the Hyperdrive cuts in you are safe from the rockets and can relax until you materialize in the next sector.

Collision with any rocket results in the loss of a ship regardless of Shield level, and necessitates doing that Sector again.

Successful completion of the warp is rewarded by a **large** level-dependent bonus.

SCORING AND BONUSES IN THE GAME

You are given 1 point each time a bolt hits a **camel**. When a **beast** is destroyed, you get the **Camel Bonus** (displayed on screen between the players' scores). This starts at 100 and doubles each time a camel bites the dust. It is reset to 100 when a Sector is cleared, and also when a player's ship is destroyed.

Big scores come from successful Hyperwarps. The higher the level just completed, the larger is the Hyperwarp bonus.

HINTS FOR PLAYING THE GAME WELL

Learn to handle the ship **instinctively**. Get up close to the camels to achieve a rapid fire rate, but **don't lose shields by colliding** with them. Learn how to **dodge bombs**, especially those nasty ones which chase you around.

While you're learning, take advantage of the **Real Cool** skill level, and if you've still got troubles, set the *bullet efficiency* to 8. Once you are more skilled, you can set the options to make the game harder for yourself.

Don't panic during warp phase, just keep on the move.

Good scores will be in the hundreds of thousands. Official **High Scores** should be set at Difficulty Fer Sure, Bullet Efficiency 3.

Happy zapping! But remember - I love those camels really!

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